2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1



562 The woman is born to be a mother. She knows it and, as her duty, should not expect anything from the others."

843 Before the birth of the child, swaddling clothes were prepared, and a cradle and wooden tub were bought. The mother herself was not supposed to sew because it was believed that this would make the baby dumb. In fact, nobody went to any trouble at all to provide an elaborate layette, for that would really seem to the peasants like tempting fate. One of the men asked me, "Who can tell whether it will be a boy or a girl, and most important, who has unnecessary money to throw away in vain, for the baby may die?"

844 At the delivery of the baby, all the young people were sent away, and only the old people and the midwife remained with the mother. "The business of the relatives is to give courage to the mother, and in case the delivery of the child is painful, the midwife massages and carefully pulls the baby out."

The peasants much preferred the midwife or *baba,* to whose old-fashioned ways they were accustomed. To be sure, they called in the village doctor if the case seemed very complicated or if the woman fainted in labor. Dr. Chirkova has encountered many interesting superstitions and folkways in her village experience; these she included in her annual reports to the District Health Office. For instance, since the baby is supposed to be born on straw, in conformity with the birth of Christ, some deliveries occurred in mangers where the doctor was quite apt to find the baby blue with cold. There were instances of women who kept the pains secret from everyone, especially the husband, for they did not "want to add to his troubles." Some of these women even went so far as to remain alone during the childbirth, cutting the cord with a sickle and tying it with their own hair. Such instances, however, were exceptional.

Many deliveries were made with the woman standing, but when labor seemed to be difficult those in attendance put a rope beneath her breasts, tied it to the ceiling, and swung her "in order that the baby might be born more easily." To lessen the ordeal still more, the *baba* moistened the lips of the woman with an herb called "The Hands of the Holy Virgin," which had been put into a bowl of water. It is assumed that the Virgin will render direct aid.

● [776]

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
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B S 753 164 B S [776] B S 192

Names of the source of the disease, particularly names of supernatural beings, can be used of the disease itself—with what degree of personification it is difficult to decide in every case. In the eastern regions it seems that a number of terms used elsewhere of common diseases, would be defined as evil

a lizard; *lisa*, disease of scalp or beard causing the hair to fall out (also a disease caused by a spirit); *metilj*, disease of the liver, in sheep or cattle; *metiljka*, a cataract, disease of the eye, an insect, moth; *mlamosi*, sunstroke (?), cf. *mlamosnica*, a centipede, a yellow larva; *magarac*, *magarevac*, whooping cough, a donkey; *mravi*, shuddering as in fever, ants; *mačka*, a cold in the nose, cat, cf. *mačić*, typhus, erysipelas, a whitish rash on the face; *mrav*, *pamrav*, 'something in the brain rolls about as though alive', brain fever, cf. *pamrava*, larva of *Gastrophilus equi*, the disease caused by it; *pauk*, syphilis, spider; *nerast*, splenitis, morbus lienis, cf. *nerast*, a young boar; *pesićevo*, *pesice*, a parasite infested wound; *prasići*, a swelling under the ears; *paučina*, herpes, a cobweb; *ospice*, variolae, wasps; *rak*, cancer, an ulcer, a festering wound, etc., crayfish; *ribine*, a swelling, a sprain, a hard knot 'like hardened arteries' which is caused by strain or by chill, rupture, cf. *riba*, a fish; *štene*, a festering wound, a young dog, cf. Bg. *skuli*, boils, eruptions; *stenći*, atheroma; *svinja*, *svinje*, scrofulosis, Bg. *svinja*, a fistula, a swelling; *prase*, scrofulosis, a pig; *srdomasi*, an illness in the head of a young child caused by a worm of the same name; *trud*, ulcer, panaritium, a hornet; *vuk*, gangrene, wolf, cf. Bg. *vălk*, laryngitis; *gagalki*, blisters in the mouth; *gogolj*, a swelling, a diving bird; *guta*, diphtheritis; *guta*, *gutal*, a pigeon, etc.; *gusenica*, a boil or tumour on the legs of cattle, a caterpillar; *guba*, *gubavica*, lepra, a swelling, a toad, also a fungus—*Coccus lecanium*, etc.; *grič*, *griža*, morsus, dysentery, etc., cancer, an open sore, cf. *griža*, *grizica*, *grižlica*, a moth or maggot, a kind of snake, a worm; *grinta*, the same, an ulcer, wound, disease of the scalp, a minute parasite, cf. *grinja*, a moth; *moljac*, a moth, a worm which breeds in the flesh; *jarac*, inflammation of the eyelids, a skin rash, cf. *jaricanje*, white spots or small blisters round the mouth and chin, an infection from cattle, a swelling on the body of cattle; *jašterica*, *gušterica*, a swelling on the tongue or foreleg, especially of cattle, a lizard; *jašterice*, small sores or boils on the side of the tongue; *koza*, *kozice*, variolae, chicken pox, a goat; *krava*, *kravica*, a swelling under the ears, on the arm, a sprain, a cow; *kukac*, panaritium, insect, salamander; *vočić*, inflammation round a bite, an inflamed wound, dim. *vo*, ox; *žaba*, *žabica*, angina, swelling in throat, any swelling, abscess, ulcer, etc., in cattle and sheep a boil on the tongue; *žaba*, frog, Bg. *zvjerinac*, herpes; *žabka*, *žalva*, fistula; *želve*, *žabe* (Slo.), scrofula, an abscess; Bg. *želka*, *želva*, tortoise; *živina*, *zverice*, *zverinac*, *živa rana*, etc., gangrenous sore or wound, cancer, inflammation, Bg. *živina*, *živinice*, *živenica*, syphilis, scrofula, swellings on the body; *živina*, *zver*, etc., animal, wild animal, etc.; *žutuga* (*žutice*, *zlatica*), icterus, a kind of fish.

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spirits. It will also be noted that these names include a number of animal names.[1]

Any attempt to discover a primal relationship between these categories or the initial reason for the adoption of animal names, would, of course, be so much waste of time if the investigation is confined to one linguistic area. In the examples that follow there will be found ample evidence of

[1] The following are names of the various kinds of supernatural beings, any of which may cause disease or harm. The greater number of these words also signify specific diseases. Even *plašnja* and *strava* may mean personal forces or beings. *Smlata*, which is generally nothing more than *Hexenschluss*, and often has ceased to have any connection with witchcraft, also means a witch or *mora*. Note that the names of supernatural beings, of the witch or fairy order, also occur as names of professional magicians and witch doctors (*viljenak, vilovnjak, vještnik, vještica, brodnik, brodnica, vila, vračarica, bajalica, baharica, madžionica*, etc.); i.e. these can be either human beings or supernatural beings. Note that some of them are generally referred to in the plural.

*Bešija, brodnica, coprnja (ica), čuma, čumica* (pl. *čumice*), *duh, loš duh, zao duh, izdat, izdajnica, jude, kamenice, okameni, okamenica, kuga, krivo oko, karan, karakandžeri, krvopilica, kratelj, skrat, skrata, kosac, kudlak, vukdolak, lisa, lune, leptir, netopir, vampir, lumpir, vampirčići, ljutice, mora, tmora, pomora, muravini, mekarine, mame, mamica* (pl. *mamice*), *mlamusi, matić, medivančići, nastrijelice, nastrelina, namerice, namet, nametnice, nežid, nežit, naprasnik, naprasnica, nahud, nahudnica, hudnici, nažurenice, žura, žuravice, nastrijelina, naletnice, noćnice, noćni osjen (sjen), senka, nečestivi, nečastivi, nečisnjak, nepomenica, ogram, ogramnica, otrovnica, proždreljevica, poganica* (pl. *-e*), *plašnja, uplah, polegač, rusak, rusa, ruse, rusalje, roške, stuhe, stihiji, sekarine, striga, sekarice, slute, sklopci, strava, strašnice, strijelica, sihir, strelka, ustrijel, šejtan, sotona, saturnica, tentacija, talasam, tenčac, utvar* (pl. *-i, -e*), *vila, samovila, samodiva, vještica, vile otrovnice, vrag, vražići, vražalica, vada, povada, vadine, urok, uročica, uročići, vadika, vražalica, viruške, uljezina, urama, uramnica, vlas, vlasi (ovi), vihor, vihorice, usadi, usov, zmet, zmaj, zduhovi, stuhe*, etc. Note the variations of meaning such as *činilica*, a witch, a charm worker, an evil spirit, a mental disease; *lahus*, a lying-in woman; *lahusi*, spirits that attack her or her child, an illness (also *kokošite lahusi*, a disease of fowls); *babice* is the usual Serbian word for this series, and also means diarrhoea. In Bulgarian we also find *ermenki* (a kind of evil spirit) which can also be equivalent to *urisnice*, spirits which foretell the fortune of a new-born child; *usov*, a sheep disease, as well as a spirit; *ustrel*, a spirit, in particular a spirit which attacks sheep, or the spirit of an unchristened child, a vampire and so on, also a disease without reference to the agency of spirits; *čumice* are the children, *čuma*, plague; *bolehčići* are disease-spirits collectively. (Šišков, *Život na Bulgarite v Srednja Rodopa* (Plovdiv, 1886), p. 46.)

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nature, for as a rule they are descriptive rather than precise, like the euphemisms for evil spirits: 'unmentionable evil', traitor', 'enemy', 'great sickness', 'aunt', 'sister', 'kind ones', 'honey sweet ones', and so on. *Vrag*, *vražica*, is a generic word for 'devil', 'spirit', but locally it may have a specific use. At Vidin for example it means 'splenitis', like the Russian *besnaja* (epilepsy), and so on.

For colic (*izdat*) in the Homoljski district, the patient is fumigated or steamed, and if he vomits it is a good sign. Or the witch woman places three grains of corn on the umbilicus, with three beans, the seeds of the pepper plant; she holds her knife there point downwards and she says: 'Black arrow unstruck by arrows, why have you loosened your hair, why have you disfigured your face?...Why not, when I (attack) you with one knife and you me with two...' (follows a counting out formula on these lines). 'Flee arrow (to the usual place where there are no cocks, etc.).'[1] Miličević gives this treatment for the same disease, which he calls *nastup* (*nastupiti*, to tread, begin, come): the patient is made to drink water from a mortar (*stupa*), the mortar is passed three times round his head, he is then well covered and left to sleep. The mortar is left standing upside down overnight.[2] In the same way wine is poured through the chimney into a mortar, and a little is given each morning to the children as a preventive against whooping-cough (*da ne nastupa*). The mortar cure for stomach pains and fevers may be found where the diseases are not known by this name, but whether the cause is the false analogy of the whooping-cough cure, or has a different history, cannot be said. In another exorcism the disease is addressed as: '*nametnike*, *nametnice*—put on and putters on (of evil), *nagaznice*—treaders on, *napasnice*—attackers, enemies...whether of mountain, field or sea, of Jewish, Albanian, Serbian or Gipsy origin...old or young, male or female...'.

*Namet* or *nenadnja* is a sudden attack, e.g. stomach-ache, but also a spell. *Sugreb*, which at the same time means a

[1] S.E.Z. xix, p. 219. [2] M. Miličević, *op. cit.* p. 285, etc.

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reddish rash, is a mysterious disease caused by treading on a charmed place, or spell. In Serbia it is associated with places where a dog, cat or wild animal has scratched up the earth. There is an extensive terminology for phenomena of this order. *Ograisati se*, in common use at any rate since the eighteenth century, means roughly to walk accidentally on a spell, as in the example, *Ili mi se junak ograisio, ograisio na kom krstopuću*...—'My hero may have mistrodden, mistrodden on some cross-roads.' After sunset one should not kill snakes,[1] make water outside the house, sleep under a walnut tree and so on (*jer bi time ograisao*). Should a pregnant woman tread (*nagazi*) on the blood of a slaughtered pig there will be red spots on her child. *Nagaziti na čine, na vraga, na šejtana* = to tread accidentally on spells or demons. In Bulgaria and East Serbia and in later dictionaries (nineteenth century) we find *ugramak, ogramak, ograma, urama*, etc., from the Turkish. Gerov gives *urma, orama, nagaznice, nagaozvačka*, etc., a disease caused by an evil spirit, equivalent to *naletiše, vitruške* (a kind of spirit, an evil wind), and there are equivalent nouns and verbs in modern Greek. Further there is the series *naseljine*—when a man sits on a bad thing, or when it fixes itself on to him. The concept includes wind-born spirits, like the Russian *nasylka po vetru*; it is not to be confused with the complaints connected with the 'settling' of blood, e.g. under a bruise (*nasela krv*), etc.

The effects of *ograma* seem to be mostly rheumatic pains, often counted as a *vila* disease and, as we have seen, also attributed to wind. In Bulgarian dialects rheumatism is called *vetər* (wind), whether or not *vila* sent.[2] Blindness, deafness, dumbness, epilepsy, paralysis, fevers, rheumatism, are some of the typical diseases sent by *vile*, which can be cured only by those in contact with these beings. Diseases can

[1] Cf. Gl.Z.M. (1907), *loc. cit.*

[2] Cf. a spell running: *nemitnice, nedojenice, nevenčanice, vile, vetrovi i nekama bolesti, sama te molim, je, Dona bajalica...*; Miličević, *Glasnik Srpskog Učenog Društva*, XXII (1867). Cf. *viher*, meaning 'a fever' (S.E.Z. XII, p. 409).

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be divided into something like natural diseases and supernatural ones. The latter are called *vila* diseases, 'treacherous' (*neverne*) diseases, and diseases 'put on' (*nametnute*) by magic or the evil eye.

If one goes outside at night in an evil hour, or makes water at night in an unclean place (he should as a safeguard spit first three times) and after he fall ill, he is said to have come upon evil (*uradisal*). The cure at Libjahovo is to wash him with unbroken water and throw the water outside the house saying: 'From the dung heap you came, to the dunghill return, gentle and honied ones.' Or else let the unfortunate man take a cake smeared with honey and put it on the place where he thinks that he caught the disease to *appease the* '*urama*'.[1] Such offerings are to be made should one urinate under an old rose bush or any other tree, and afterwards be troubled by pains in the back and head and legs. In the Nišava district for this kind of disease (*ogradisanje*), the woman doctor (*bajalica*) sprinkles the place with sherbet on a sprig of hyssop, and at the same time beseeches those who have sent the illness to remove it *in return for this rich gift*.[2] Honey or honey water is the usual libation, and honey is one of the traditional offerings to the *vile*.

*Namera* is used rather in the same sense, as well as to signify an ill-wished misfortune or an evil eye. Diagnosis of these diseases can be made from the clothes worn by the patient when he caught it, or by bringing certain things—flowers, nails, horseshoes, a glass of wine, water, salt, and food—either to the spot in question or to trees commonly associated with spirits, such as roses, blackthorns, willows, etc. A prayer is generally addressed to the spirits or to the tree. It is common to leave the offerings over night, and if the next day they have been in any way disturbed, a leaf fallen into the wine or what not, it is clear that the man has been enchanted. The offerings can serve afterwards as a medicine.

Distinguished from ill-wishing and spell casting in the

[1] Cf. S.E.Z. XII, p. 445; Sb.N.U. (1926), p. 162; Gl.Z.M. p. 587.
[2] V. M. Nikolić, *Iz Lužnice i Nišave* (1910), p. 278.

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EF6 Serbs EF6
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Bulgaria EE1
Contemporary Macedonians EF8



S 754 This was the curse of St Petka and St Nedelja upon Vuk Vučković for robbing a monastery. After sickening for twelve years his mother asked him for what sin he was chastened, and no sooner had he confessed the truth than his soul slipped out of his bones. He was buried but the earth heaved him up out of her, and the sea refused his corpse. His mother took his body and put it into a cannon and so blew him to fragments and his dust was scattered. We have already given enough examples to show that the symptoms described are not likely to have been understood originally as mere poetical hyperbole, but as sound folk-pathology.

C B CM S 776 753 795 The *vile* (*samovile*, *samodive*) are nature-spirits, and they are of different kinds according to the places which they inhabit: trees, mountains, sweet waters, seas, clouds and so on. They are frequently called 'the good ones', 'the sweet ones'. In some parts they are called *vještice*, *coprnice*, the usual names for witch. Sometimes they are decidedly evil spirits, sometimes good, sometimes merely capricious or envious; but they are always connected with disease, with its origin and with its cure. They can heal the wounds given by their own arrows.

The diseases brought by these nymphs are typically fevers, perhaps because of their association with watery places, as well as aches in the bones, madness and epilepsy. A *vila* can take a man's shadow from him, and he wanders as aimlessly as a headless fly. Perhaps *vrbanac*, as a name for a skin disease, has been coined by a popular analogy with the willow tree (*vrba*), which figures largely in cures and in *vila* mythology. Diseases of this name are sometimes said to be *vila* sent. In Macedonia, North and West Bulgaria, in the Dalmatian hinterland and elsewhere a complete *vila* cult can be found at least in traces, with sacred springs visited and petitioned on certain days, offerings made to the spirits and special intermediaries between them and ordinary men. Some features of these local cults and survivals are reminiscent of those known to be connected directly with the cult and tendance of the dead ancestors. The *vile*, as we have remarked, are also connected with winds. A local name for them in

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Bulgaria is *vihruške* (winds). In South-west Macedonia they are supposed to inhabit winds that guard their springs.[1] *Dobrinjica* is also an euphemistic term for a fairy, and also for certain pains. *Dobra* at Orhanie, in Bulgaria, is recognised by a swelling or inflammation and is cured by reciting an appeal to '*Dobrice*! sisters!' (i.e. the *Samovile*) which ends: 'The wind blew you hither, the wind blow you away!'[2]

The exorciser may refer to an alliance with the *vile*, as well as to the approval of God, the obedience which spirits lend her, and the virtue of her hand. Thus one declares: 'Our friends the *samovile* have sent us (to you). They raise their voices to heaven and spread their tears on the earth. Here it is filthy, here it stinks, here sows farrow, bitches have their young, mares foal....'[3] When a fracture will not heal it may be called a fairy fracture (*vilinski slom, vilovski ulom*—Croatia, Dalmatia, cf. *smlata*). It is fumigated with holy

[1] Cf. V. M. Nikolić, 'Iz Prespe', *Godišnjica Nikole Čupića* (1905), pp. 158, etc.; D. Marinov, *Vera i Religiozni narodni običai*, Sb.N.U. xxvm, p. 33.

Feeding the wind was a custom known in many parts of Austria, including the Slavonic provinces. The winds were fed with flour, salt, corn, etc., sometimes on special festivals, and witches, who were responsible for raising winds, carried a paste of flour in a bag for the wind. These offerings are not only reminiscent of the offerings made by the South Slavs to *vile* and to sacred trees, etc., but to a practice of curing 'fear' (*strava*) by means of flour. This custom is found in Macedonia and Central Bulgaria and, may be, elsewhere. The seeress takes two handfuls of flour and touches her patient on the head, and then every part of him down to the feet, while she recites a spell which bids the *strava* to pass from head to forehead, from forehead to eyes, etc., down to the feet, and out at the toes. This is done three times. Then the seeress throws the flour either on to the hearth, if the rite is performed in the house, or against an old tree, if it takes place out of doors. The figure made by the flour is interpreted in the same way as the molten lead which is used for another cure for this complaint.

On the custom of feeding the winds, known in German as *windfüttern*, see V. Fossl, *Volksmedicin und medicinischer Aberglaube in Steiermark*, 1885, p. 61; J. Krainz, *Sitten, Bräuche und Meinungen des deutschen Volkes in Steiermark*, Zeitschrift für oesterr. Volkskunde, II, p. 307; E. H. Hoffmann Krayer, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglauben*, III (*füttern*).

[2] Ginčev, *op. cit.* Sb.N.U. III (1890), p. 144.

[3] V. M. Nikolić, *Iz Lužnice i Nišave*, S.E.Z. XVII, p. 277.

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she killed with her breath. Against either the fruit of a tree resembling a wolf's paw is stuck over the door. Throughout Dalmatia it was anciently the custom to hang out a wolf's tail or the tail of an ass or some other beast, as is now sometimes done in the hinterland.

God was building a monastery—so a Bulgarian song begins—He sent Plague ('the swiftest sickness') to fetch innocent souls—of old people for the foundations, young men for the walls, young women for the windows, children for the transept, and so on. Plague went to Janko's house, but she could not get into the courtyard, for Janko's dogs had been born on a Saturday of Holy Week and recognised her for what she was, though she came disguised as a gipsy. God told her to take the form of a bear, which she did, and appeared as a savage terrible bear, and so accomplished her mission.[1] Like Death, Plague in stories has a book or scales and, like Death, she has been known to take a bribe or to serve men out of gratitude or friendship.[2]

Against Small-pox, Cholera or the Plague, whichever happens to be most familiar, this kind of precaution was and may still be taken. Fresh water, a mirror, a comb and salt are left for her by a tidy hearth at night, or a present of fowls, bread and wine taken to a distance beyond the village in the hope that she will go there and pass by the houses. Or she is induced to take her seat in a cart, given presents and left somewhere in the open fields or by the roadside, or in the next parish, with a couple of roast fowls, a bottle of wine and a loaf of bread. Plague is the god-parent of those born on a Saturday or the Saturday of Holy Week and therefore these are immune from her and take a principal part in the ploughing rites described below. Further, it is said that she will not attack a clean neat house.

South Slav folk-lore abounds in monsters, many quite unburdened by any departmental duties, but some not unlike

[1] M. Arnaudov, *Smorna Dobrudža*, Sb.N.U. xxxv (1923), pp. 150–2, cf. p. 339; Kačanovski, *Pamjatniki* ('*Janko i Kuga*'), etc.
[2] E.g. Ristić and Lončarski, *Srpske Narodne Pripovjetke*, III.

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the disease sisters. Male personifications of disease are more rare. The Bulgarian shepherds of Libjahovo have from time to time been plagued by *Dedejko* ('grand-daddy') who attacks their sheep in summer. A magician is then engaged, who goes from sheep to sheep shaking each in turn. As soon as he spots *Dedejko* he strikes out at him and falls to the earth as though dead. The shepherds throw water on him and revive him. *Dedejko's* blood is found where his stick struck a sheep, on its horns or on the ground.[1] The herdsmen of Bosnia have a similar enemy, *Kravosac* (cow-sucker) whose blood is many-coloured. When he can do so unseen, his chief pleasure is to suck the milk of mottled cows. The udders then swell and the cow often dies. *Ustrel* is another cattle or sheep disease which in Serbia (so far as I know) is not personified, but in certain districts of Bulgaria is believed to be a kind of spirit which rides on the heads of animals.

Diseases are said to be caused by winds[2] and to be carried in the air, for the wind is the element of many spirits. A certain class of skin eruptions, with eczema and erysipelas, are called black, red, white wind, etc. 'Keep the devils' wind from me' is a Hercegovinian saying (*Odbite od mene vjetar sotonski*). It is also said that wind blows strongly where human blood is spilt. Diseases said to come on wind are called—among other names—*dobrinjice* (*v. supra*). In an evil-eye exorcism comes the phrase: 'On the winds you came, on the winds are you gone.' Gusts of wind, particularly when they raise a cloud of dust or leaves or small stones are dangerous. They bring fever, for example. Rheumatic pains are caused by blood and wind getting mixed, or by being 'caught by wind'.[3] Wind is associated with chill, and hence the sharp pains in back and chest which may indicate an internal inflammation. It was said that winds had entered

[1] *Bajania, Vračuvanija i Lekuvanija ot sela Libjahovo, Nevrokopsko* (*rukopisen G. M. Gornev*), Sb.N.U. XXXVI (1926), p. 163.

[2] 'Wind', of course, includes what is popularly called in England 'wind in the stomach', flatulence, etc.

[3] Cf. Gl.Z.M. XII, p. 198.